

VZCZCXRO7569

PP RUEHBZ RUEHDU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEHKI #0322 0751218  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 161218Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5802  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHMFISI HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000322

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV KDEM ASEC KPKO MOPS CASC CG  
SUBJECT: DEADLINE TO REPLACE BEMBA AND RUBERWA GUARDS  
PASSES WITHOUT INCIDENT

REF: KINSHASA 306

**¶1.** (U) A March 15 deadline to replace with police officers the personal guard forces of former vice presidents Jean-Pierre Bemba and Azarias Ruberwa passed without incident (reftel). Traffic was lighter than usual in the Gombe district of central Kinshasa on March 15, but businesses remained open throughout the day. MONUC placed additional armored vehicles and peacekeepers near Bemba's and Ruberwa's residences, and there were no reports of violence or confrontations.

**¶2.** (U) None of Bemba's or Ruberwa's guards appear to have departed their respective compounds March 15. Congolese armed forces chief of staff Lt. Gen. Kisempia Sungilanga had ordered the former vice presidents' guard forces to report for military integration, citing a November 15, 2006, presidential decree according protection to the four transitional vice presidents. Their guard forces are to be eventually replaced by 12-member contingents of police bodyguards.

**¶3.** (U) MONUC and Minister of Defense Chikez Diemu have been negotiating with the Bemba and Ruberwa camps regarding replacement of their guards. The Minister told MONUC's Radio Okapi in a widely broadcast interview that the government did not intend to force the issue. MONUC military spokesman Lt. Col. Didier Rancher was quoted in press reports that discussions are underway. Bemba adviser Thomas Luhaka said the MLC is "ready for a compromise" but seeks assurances from President Kabila.

**¶4.** (SBU) Comment: The situation in Kinshasa is calm, so discussions are underway to resolve the matter peacefully. The replacement of Bemba's and Ruberwa's guards remains a serious concern, but thus far all the principals involved are taking measures to avoid a confrontation. End comment.

MEECE